

11 April 1963

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Answers to "Questions for CIA Arising From Cuba Study"

1. A combination of factors leads to the conclusion that the Soviet decision to send strategic missiles to Cuba was probably taken sometime between late March and mid-May, and most probably during the month of April. Of course, it probably was not a snap decision and most likely had been under consideration for some time. The political climate in Cuba was probably not considered propitious for the missile venture by the USSR until after the resolution in late March of the political conflict within the Cuban leadership. The estimated time to marshal the equipment in the Soviet Union for shipment to Cuba [redacted] strongly indicates that the decision was probably taken by mid-May. Also, it was on 14 May that the supplementary protocol to the Cuban-Soviet trade agreement was announced. This agreement substantially increased Soviet economic support for Cuba and may well have been a quid pro quo for Cuban acceptance of the missiles

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Referral Review by
NIMA completed

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3. OCI did not request or receive an evaluation from DIA on this.

4. We estimate, using the same methods as for the other months mentioned, that [redacted] military cargo were shipped to Cuba in October.

[redacted] Bear in mind that in October at least 16 Soviet ships turned back to the USSR while en route to Cuba when the US quarantine was imposed. If they had arrived as scheduled, the October figure would have been considerably higher. (The point, of course, is that the buildup was still in full swing.)

5. We had no raw reports mentioning SAMs prior to 29 August, when aerial photography confirmed their presence.

[redacted] As more and more evidence poured in, we became convinced that this was at least one aspect of the Cuban buildup--one, incidentally, that had been suspected for nearly a year. (These suspicions had been reported in the CIB in the autumn of 1961, and in at least two CIWR articles in early 1962) As a result [redacted] in the first half of August, we were able to put together a CIB item [redacted] suggesting that SAM sites were being set up. (This was an "asterisked" item--an item representing OCI views, not yet coordinated with State/DOD.) Finally, [redacted] we were able to get a similar statement in a coordinated publication, the Watch Committee report [redacted] In short, there was some excellent reporting on the early stages of the buildup, and while we would not expect the sources of these reports to know precisely

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what they were describing, the details they gave proved accurate and enabled us to report on SAMs well before they could be confirmed in aerial photography.



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7. (a) Answered elsewhere.

(b) Four missions were authorized [redacted] [redacted] One target was the suspected cruise missile site at Banes, which was obscured by clouds on [redacted] flight, and covered by the [redacted] mission. The [redacted] flight, incidentally, covered Sagua la Grande and found no evidence of what subsequently became MRBM sites.

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[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] The flight approved for [redacted]
[redacted] was canceled because of weather. It was flown [redacted] but provided no results because of weather, and had to be rescheduled.

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25X1 The [] mission was targeted to look for SAM sites on the Isle of Pines and Bay of Pigs.

25X1 Since weather had permitted coverage of only two of the four missions assigned for September, these flights were carried over, with a peripheral mission on [] along the southeast coast, and a peripheral mission on [] along the northeast coast. (There was a mechanical abort on [] and weather stood down the planes [] inclusive.)

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25X1 A memorandum of 3 October and a USIB recommendation dated 5 October requested priority coverage of suspected surface-to-surface (MRBM) areas in Cuba. The planes stood down [] because authorization for October flights had not yet been granted, and [] because of weather. Transfer of responsibility for the flights precluded a mission on 13 October. The mission which first discovered MRBM's was flown on []

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(c) It will take a few more days to obtain authoritative answers to these questions.

8. On several occasions pilots returning from low altitude missions reported that they believed they had been fired on by ground batteries, but that the shooting was ineffective. There is no way of determining whether the batteries in these instances were manned by Soviet or Cuban personnel.

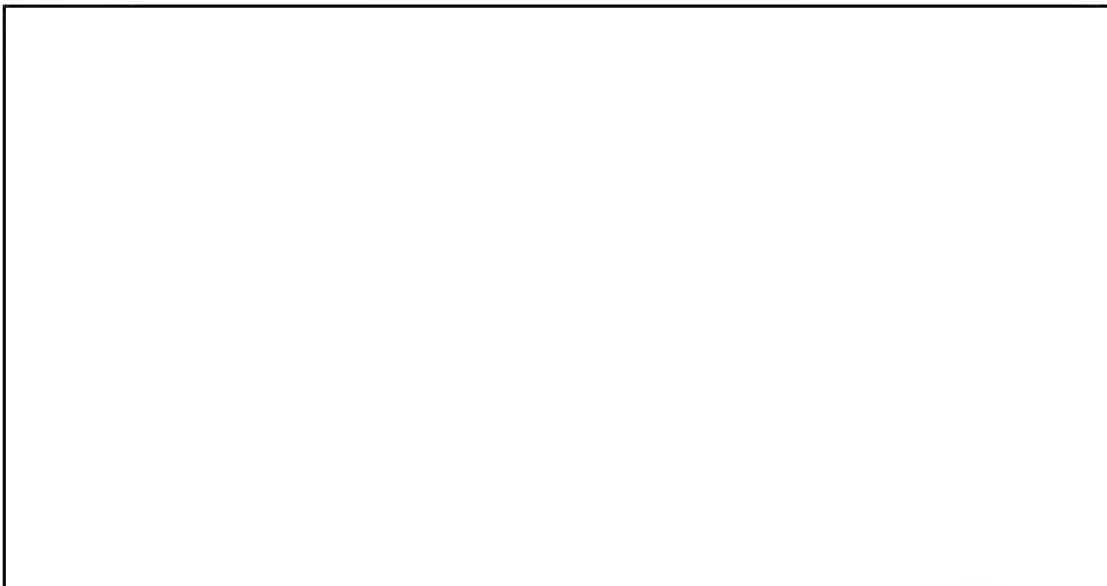
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10. Both during the removal of the missiles and during the removal of the bombers, Soviet ships were photographed and inspected from alongside as well as from the air. Helicopters apparently were used in some instances. Excellent photography was obtained on many of the ships. In the case of the missiles, the Soviets removed canvas coverings for the inspection.

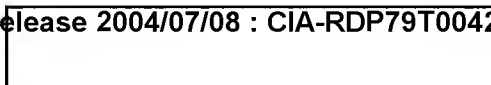
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